

USM | Connects

Volume Two | 2018



Inside: Career Building

- On the job with alumni
- Students' hands-on learning
- Forging a great partnership

Texas Instruments' Kayla Christy '12, process development engineer; Chris Joyce, factory manager; and Matt Araujo '15, process integration engineer.

The Power of Partnerships

How **Texas Instruments' Chris Joyce** & other community leaders are teaming up with USM to build a **stronger workforce**.

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The USM Foundation supports the success of the University of Southern Maine through philanthropy, engagement, innovation, and service. We are the nimble and responsive partner USM needs to achieve its vision as a community-engaged university.

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From the President

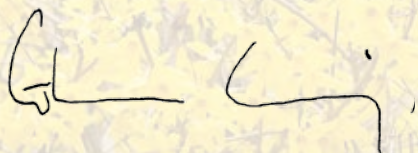
The power of partnerships

The theme of this issue of *USM Connects* is partnership. And by that we mean the powerful, mutually beneficial relationships USM has forged with employers and organizations throughout Maine. Great partnerships are a win-win for everyone, as the pages of this magazine will bear out.

Inside, you'll read stories from corporate partners like WEX, where USM students have the highest rate of conversion from interns to full-time employment. Gimbala Sankare, Global Talent Acquisition Coordinator at WEX, has a theory about what gives USM students the edge: "The differentiator is that they have stories to tell."

Our students and alumni do have stories to tell. You'll meet Dan Kleban '04, a self-described college drop-out, who went on to graduate *summa cum laude* from USM and then law school, and eventually founded Maine Beer Company. Rob McCann enlisted in the Marines at age 20 and today, many arduous journeys later, is majoring in political science at USM. Melissa Cunningham, mother of 7-year-old Travis, is pursuing her nursing degree and interning at USM's Bayside Partnership — a program she's passionate about because, "As a child, I received many of the same social services that can be found in Bayside."

The path to higher education is often circuitous and for many of our students, partners make all the difference. It may be an internship or a first job; it may be a class taught by a returning alum; it may be career advice from an employer. These connections are helping to fuel the success of our students, as surely as they are helping to cultivate the next generation of talent for Maine's workforce. That's the power of partnership.



Glenn Cummings, Ed.D.
President, University of Southern Maine



USM CONNECTS

Volume Two | 2018

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Left to right: Thanas Budri '97, FA engineer manager/senior member of technical staff; Alan Withee '95, accountant; Jared Lane '14, manufacturing supervisor; Mike Martin '80, supply chain planner; Daryl Batoosingh '89, process development engineering tech; Paul Fearon '95, finance/planning manager; Chris Joyce, factory manager; Chris Amadon '11, equipment engineer; Marc Landry '91, process development engineer/member technical staff; Joe Harlow '14, CIM/helpdesk; Kayla Christy '12, process development engineer; Keith Johnson '06, equipment tech; Bill Belcher '14, process engineer manager; Barry Philbrick '90, PDE tech; Tim Lambert '05, IT systems engineer; Matt Araujo '15, process integration engineer; Joe Williams '02, process engineer manager; Joe Hallen '02, process engineer; Pete Dube '84, IT factory apps developer; Robert Tracy '04, process engineer tech; Steve Coleman '09, thin films equipment engineer.

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USM Foundation:

A new season of growth & transformation

Early this year, USM President Glenn Cummings and USM Foundation Board Chair Cyrus Hagge announced plans to further the transformative changes underway at the USM Foundation. This new stage in the Foundation's growth includes a shift in leadership, effective May 1, as Ainsley L.N. Wallace, formerly vice president of the USM Foundation and vice president of corporate engagement, became the Foundation's next president.

This move comes as the Foundation is performing at a higher level than ever before, fueled by growing community, alumni and employer engagement and a strong, supportive board of community and business leaders.

Wallace succeeds George N. Campbell Jr., who spearheaded the Foundation's successful transition to an independent nonprofit created to support USM through philanthropy and engagement. Campbell will take on new consulting and volunteer roles, continuing to advance key initiatives for the University and the Foundation.

"The USM Foundation is on a stellar trajectory that will only soar higher," said Campbell. "In my mind, we've built an Olympic relay team. I started the race with the support of an outstanding board of directors, a visionary USM president, and a dedicated staff. Now, I'm handing the baton to Ainsley Wallace, who will ensure our team crosses the finish line in first place."

Under Campbell's leadership, in partnership with Wallace, the Foundation has doubled alumni engagement, boosted corporate partnerships, and dramatically increased philanthropic support. Campbell and Wallace collaborated to set and attain ambitious goals, uncover and leverage strategic opportunities, and establish a path to sustainability and continued success. Notably, Wallace led the establishment of the MEMIC John T. Leonard Endowed Chair in Risk Management & Insurance, the largest in USM's history.

In his January announcement, Cummings remarked:

"As the Foundation's vice president and as USM's VP of corporate engagement,



USM Foundation Immediate Past President George N. Campbell Jr. and USM Foundation President Ainsley L.N. Wallace.



Ainsley Wallace has proven herself effective in building support, both within and outside the USM community and will be an outstanding Foundation president."

With Wallace at the helm, the Foundation will continue strengthening a resurgent USM. As Foundation Board Member Deanna Sherman, MBA '96 and CEO of Dead River Company, expressed:

"Ainsley assumes this role at a key juncture for the organization. Her drive, leadership skills and learning agility will be immensely valuable to all stakeholders at USM and throughout our greater Maine community."

"On a personal note, as the first person in my immediate family to get a four-year degree, I feel a deep connection to the students and mission of USM," Wallace said. "Strategically, I am convinced that USM's unique advantage is our ability to build the kind of community partnerships that both enrich our students' lives and help drive our economy. The next five years will be transformational for USM, and they will be defined by powerful partnerships. I am honored and excited to lead the Foundation at this dynamic moment."

The Power of Partnerships



>> How Maine business and community leaders are teaming up with USM to build a stronger workforce.

At the University of Southern Maine, we believe in the power of partnerships. Engaging with local businesses and organizations helps our students prepare for careers, supports the excellent work of our faculty and strengthens Maine's economy.

As you will see on the following pages, our students and alumni are thriving in Maine workplaces – from hospitals to state-of-the-art computer chip manufacturing clean rooms. Our students are learning valuable real-world

skills that are supplementing their classroom work, our alumni are playing an increasingly vital role as community leaders, and employers are helping build an experienced and sustainable workforce.

As USM President Glenn Cummings writes in his introduction to this magazine, "Great partnerships are a win-win for everyone." We look forward to building on these success stories as we work together to strengthen Maine's economic and educational landscape.

"USM has demonstrated its commitment to learning about us and other employers. They want to understand the needs of the business community, and how best to prepare graduates for successful careers."

– Dead River Company President and CEO Deanna Sherman '96

“I believe the business community will come to see USM as a gem in our backyard.”

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP: Dead River employees participate in USM classes and Career Hub, Corporate Partners, and USM Works for ME on-site events. The company hires USM grads and interns and offers employee tuition reimbursement benefits, which are utilized at USM. Deanna Sherman serves on the USM Foundation Board.

Deanna Sherman '96

President and CEO, Dead River Company



“In some ways, Dead River has always been connected to USM. A number of our employees are USM graduates, contributing their talents at all levels of the company. I myself earned an MBA at USM in the 1990s while working full time at Dead River.

“Despite those connections, we have not had a more formal relationship with USM. Fortunately, that is changing.

“As a member of the USM Foundation Board over the past two years, I've focused on strengthening the ways in which the University engages with corporate partners. USM has demonstrated its commitment to learning about us and other employers. They want to understand the needs of the business community, and how best to prepare graduates for successful careers. Employers are responding in turn by supporting USM, whether it be through scholarships, tuition reimbursement for their employees, collaboration on research or providing expertise in the classroom.

“We work with students on a number of levels. Recently, Claudette Townsend '17, director of business optimization, and our director of organizational development have volunteered in USM classrooms. I have met with MBA students working on an innovation project and have helped students with interviewing skills.

“We have had a very positive experience with recent graduates who have joined our team. Like so many



From left, Dead River Company's Tim Smith '16, delivery driver manager, Deanna Sherman '96, president and CEO, and Claudette Townsend '17, director of business optimization.

companies, we are focusing more and more on succession planning and are optimistic that USM will continue to provide high-quality training for the next generation of leaders at Dead River and other Maine companies.

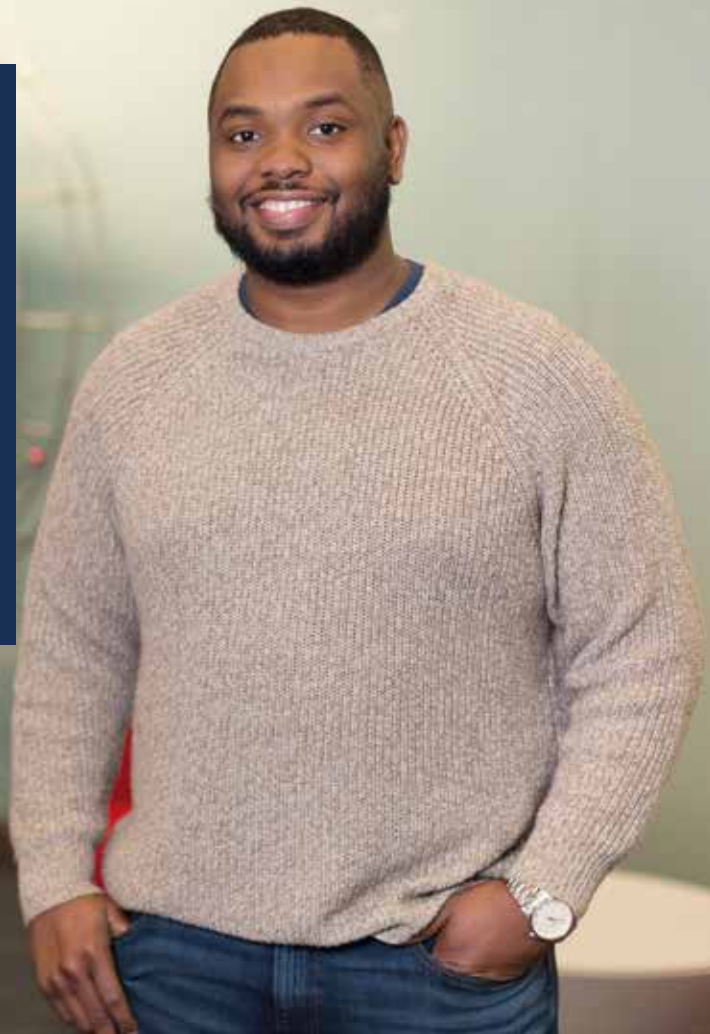
“Working with USM President Glenn Cummings, George Campbell, Ainsley Wallace, and others, I've seen real vision, energy and promise around this institution. With meaningful engagement, I believe the business community will come to see USM as a gem in our backyard.”

“USM students have the highest rate of conversion from interns to full-time employment at WEX.”

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP: WEX hires USM interns year-round and offers a scholarship for USM students. Leaders from WEX are involved with a variety of departments and with the Career Hub. WEX also offers tuition reimbursement, which is utilized at USM. Gimbala Sankare is currently taking graduate classes at USM.

Gimbala Sankare

Global Talent Acquisition Coordinator, WEX



“ Since joining WEX in 2016, it's been my job to establish an internship program, build relationships with colleges and universities in Maine and beyond, and generally to be in charge of talent acquisition. That's a fancy way of saying that I look for smart, hard-working, creative people to become part of our team.

“For many of our openings, ranging from interns to data scientists, we don't have to look any further than USM.

“The proximity of USM and the quality of the candidates – USM students have the highest rate of conversion from interns to full-time employment at WEX – has made USM one of our most important educational partners.

“What gives USM students an edge? The differentiator is that they have stories to tell. Life has not always been easy. Maybe they didn't have an opportunity to go to college right away, and they had to work for that opportunity. So they developed a drive to be successful, to stay focused and achieve their goals, step by step. That is what we care about at WEX.

“We see a close relationship between USM and WEX moving forward. It's a two-way street. If we can find the right talent for the future and build the talent we already have, the



Mitchell Eaton '18 joined WEX full time as a software development engineer following his internship.

closer WEX can be in terms of supporting USM in multiple capacities, whether it be in research and development, philanthropy, or other ways.”

USM engineers can go “toe to toe with the best in the world.”

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP: Texas Instruments boasts its own active USM Alumni Association. TI is especially active with the Engineering Department, offers internships, provides a scholarship for USM students, and co-sponsors the Maine Science Bowl. Chris Joyce serves on the USM Board of Visitors.

Chris Joyce

Plant Manager,
Texas Instruments



“With 19 factories running in nine countries across North America, Europe, Asia and Japan, Texas Instruments (TI) promotes collaboration as a pillar of strength for operational excellence. The TI manufacturing plant in South Portland is working hand-in-hand with global colleagues to drive improvements. Our engineers, educated at USM and UMaine, stand toe to toe with the best in the world.

“There are about 35 USM graduates working at Texas Instruments. Many more have taken courses, workshops, or other offerings at the university. Both USM and UMaine have active alumni associations within Texas Instruments, and we employ student interns from both universities.

“This homegrown talent has been absolutely essential for the success of Texas Instruments and many other companies operating here in Maine. Still, there are clouds on the horizon. Maine has fallen behind other New England states in terms of investment in engineering. As our industry has been here in Maine for over 50 years, we face retirements of our engineering talent. For us to continue to successfully compete on a global level, we must educate, train and mentor more engineers across a wide range of engineering disciplines.



From left, Marc Landry '91, process development engineer and Texas Instrument's USM alumni president; and Bill Belcher '14, process engineering manager.

“USM's Engineering Department is well positioned to meet these challenges. From my perspective, the most important step toward competitiveness is already underway. It's the collaboration between the two engineering powerhouses – USM and UMaine. By pulling in the same direction, we can grow enrollment and further develop the pipeline of talent for engineering employers throughout Maine.”

“Our partnership with USM has become an essential part of our business.”

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP: Berry Talbot Royer hosts a best-in-class tax internship for USM students, and awards scholarships to top accounting students. More than 50% of the firm’s employees are former USM interns and graduates; in fact BTR’s first intern, Katie Zenko ’08, is now tax partner. Mike Royer’s wife and son are proud USM alumni.

Michael Royer

President,
Berry Talbot Royer

“ Our internship program is at the heart of our partnership with USM. Although our company is small, we believe our program is the very best in the state of Maine within the accounting industry.

“Each year, three USM students start with us during the fall semester and work through the end of tax season. They receive competitive pay and participate in a comprehensive training and mentorship program that prepares them to play key roles for us during tax season.

“By the end of the spring semester the interns are the equivalent of a second-year staff person. They have the skills and confidence necessary to contribute in any accounting employment opportunity and could literally start their own tax practice. This experience gives them a distinct advantage upon graduation.

“Our partnership with USM has become an essential part of our business. The quality of the students and professors is excellent. Six of our past interns, including my partner, Katie Zenko ’08, have stayed on as employees.

“After their internship we continue to offer our support. Although we are sorry to see them go, we wholeheartedly recommend our USM students to other employers. We’ve



Berry Talbot Royer has a strong contingent of USM students and alumni. In addition to Michael Royer, president, pictured here are (in the back row) Susan Tuttle, tax staff intern, Kevin Yates ’16, senior accountant, Bryanna Phillips, tax staff intern, Jessica Brady, tax staff intern, and (in the front row) Katie Zenko ’08, tax partner.

had former interns go on to work at ‘Big 4’ accounting firms in Boston, other firms in Maine, and attend top master’s degree programs. We’re extremely proud of our intern alumni group, and our relationship with USM, and we’re excited to keep the program rolling.”

“USM interns have been integral to the building of my private practice here.”

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP: Dr. Fred Fridman mentors USM pre-med students and provides guidance and internships to help in the medical school preparation process. His interns have been successfully accepted into medical schools.

Fred Fridman '07

D.O., Director of Brain Injury Rehabilitation, New England Rehabilitation Hospital

Managing Partner, Rehabilitation Associates Inc.



“My undergraduate experience at USM challenged me to strive for excellence and started me on the path to becoming a physician. As a D.O. (doctor of osteopathic medicine) who specializes in physical medicine and rehabilitation, I help people with physical impairments or disabilities.

“While I enjoyed my coursework at USM, I didn’t have many opportunities to see what it would actually be like to work in the medical field. I remember cold-calling physicians and asking if I could job shadow them. Only one replied.

“This gap between pre-med students and professionals in the field was something I wanted to address when I moved back to Portland in 2016 to start my medical practice.

“Through Dr. David Champlin, chair of the USM Biology Department, and the pre-professional students group, I have hired four USM students to work for me in a variety of capacities. They take patient histories, rotate with me through the hospital, and interact with other physicians and medical personnel. Two of the students have been accepted to medical school.

“Through their hard work, my USM interns have been integral to the building of my private practice here. I’m in the



From left: Desiree Leary '18, RA intern, Bethany Fridman, practice manager, Fred Fridman '07, D.O., Katherine DiConzo '13, nurse practitioner, and Katherine Seibel, intern.

process of formalizing a professional partnership with USM to continue to foster this win-win relationship.

“Employing students from USM has been rewarding, not only professionally, but personally. I remember being in their shoes 10 years ago, and it is exhilarating to see them grow as young professionals.”

>> USM Corporate Partners

Forging powerful connections between businesses and USM

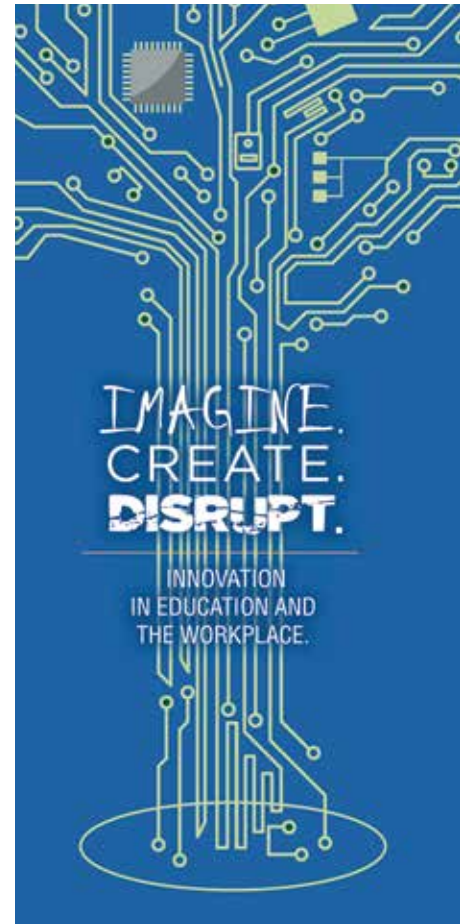
Corporate Partners is a growing community of organizations and employers who are committed to building Maine's workforce by forging partnerships with the University. Because Corporate Partners is co-chaired by community and faculty leadership, the program has become a meaningful connector between employers and USM's academic and student community.

The Corporate Partners spring 2018 series *IMAGINE. CREATE. DISRUPT* generated opportunities for creative problem solving in the changing landscape of business and higher education. Guided by our faculty co-chair, Professor Richard Bilodeau of the School of Business, the series asked us to consider how we can embrace change to cultivate new ideas and fuel innovation. The spring series explored a range of topics, including:

- **The University of the Future** – transforming higher education
- **Building a Better Internship** – innovations in workforce development

- **Robot Proof** – a book discussion centered on how to educate the next generation to invest, create and discover
- **Reimagining Capitalism** – with Harvard Business School Professor Rebecca Henderson, keynote speaker for the inaugural Timothy Hussey Leadership Institute
- **Student House of Genius** – students help you innovate
- **Look What I Made!** – student innovation showcase.

USM is building powerful collaborations with businesses and organizations that will benefit our partners and our students. As a Corporate Partner member, your organization will be assigned a USM employer relationship manager, who will help curate your experience with the university. For more information or to become a member, visit: usm.maine.edu/corporatepartners. Be on the lookout for an announcement on the Corporate Partners fall 2018 series.



USM is building powerful collaborations with businesses and organizations that will benefit our partners and our students.

Get involved

Alumni – USM alumni are amazing and are everywhere.

Please stay in touch. **Visit alumniusm.org, call (207) 780-4833, or email alumniusm@maine.edu to find out how you can get involved.**

Career & Employment Hub – USM's Career and

Employment Hub helps students and alumni prepare for their future careers and helps employers create valuable internships. Explore possibilities with us. **Call (207) 228-8091 or email usmcareers@maine.edu to get started.**

Admissions – Considering coming to USM? We'd love to talk with you about tailoring your education to prepare you for the career of your dreams. **Call (800) 800-4USM or visit usm.maine.edu/prospective-students.**

Corporate Partners – Join us for regular programming that tackles challenges and opportunities facing the business community and USM. **Email usmcorporatepartners@maine.edu.**

Community Career Network – Help a current USM student or fellow alum by joining the USM Community Career Network. **Learn about mentoring and other volunteer opportunities at alumniusm.org/ccn.**

USM Works for ME – We connect with local employers right at their doorsteps. If you're interested in having USM visit your workplace for a lunch-and-learn, a Husky Pride Coffee Break, or want to explore other ways to connect **email alumniusm@maine.edu.**

Professional Development Programs – Find the right program for your career or organization. USM has programs for adults at all stages of their working lives. Count on us for professional development or learning just for the fun of it. **To learn more, visit usm.maine.edu/pdp.**

>> Women in Leadership

Building a strong professional network of women alumnae

One afternoon in 2017, over drinks at the end of a long day, three USM alumnae came to the same brilliant conclusion: wouldn't it be great if USM women who are doing such interesting, meaningful and important work in the world could have a way to connect with each other? This "ah-ha" moment was the beginning of the USM Women in Leadership alumnae group.

Women alumnae from USM are leading the way in their organizations, their communities and their careers. Many of these amazing women are at the top of their professions in banking, accounting, education, engineering, the arts and entrepreneurship. (And we can even boast a world champion gold medalist in our midst: Mandy Sumner '02 was the first American to win a medal in the sport of free diving!)

This accomplished community of USM women should come as no surprise, considering that 66 percent of USM's 52,000-plus alumni and 60 percent of our current students are women.

Add to that fact that 75 percent of



USM alumni live and work in Maine. Our alumni, women and men, play a critical role in Maine's economy, which is one of the primary reasons that the University is working to ensure that our students have an outstanding educational and professional foundation, and strong networks and pathways to thrive in the future.

With initiatives like the newly formed Women in Leadership alumnae group (and other alumni-affinity groups), we're engaging USM alumni authentically to create a strong professional network that is in service to our students.

Since that fateful cocktail hour in 2017, we've hosted three highly successful social and networking events for USM women. These include a kickoff breakfast on the Portland campus, a happy hour in Lewiston and a "Galentine's Day" celebration of sorority. By all accounts, USM women want more – and we want more of you to join us.

We plan to continue to cultivate alumni connectivity with USM affinity groups as we build a powerful culture where Huskies help and hire other Huskies. To join our Women in Leadership group, Gorham Grads, Business Professionals, Retirees or USM Veterans alumni groups – or to start a new group – please contact us at alumniumsm@maine.edu. It's a great way to stay up to date on events, activities and other ways to connect with USM alumni who share your interests.

>> Career & Employment Hub

Preparing students for success and building employer relationships

USM's goal is to be the region's educational partner of choice. Our Career & Employment Hub, with locations on the Portland and Gorham campuses, helps to achieve this goal by preparing students for future success and partnering with employers in a responsive way.

We are creating innovative systems and programming to engage every student, in every college, every year in order to develop career-ready graduates and interns. Our new student signature programming, which leverages employer and alumni professional resources, includes:

- Career advising for undeclared majors
- A career takeoff series
- An internship night – preparing and showcasing great internship opportunities
- Chamber of Commerce networking events (free for students)
- A veteran-specific, career-development workshop
- A professional development retreat
- Co-sponsorship of the Spring 2018 Student Leadership Summit
- A salary negotiation workshop.

Supporting student success

Our Career & Employment Hub is dedicated to student success, creating clear career pathways that students can access before, during and after graduation. Our advisors work with students to build their professional skills through workshops and events, crafting resumes and cover letters, providing mock interviews and much more.

Building employer partnerships

Finally, our staff work with employers to create valuable internship programs, connect student interns and employees with degree programs that align with workforce needs, and advertise internship opportunities to targeted students, faculty and staff for maximum outreach and impact.

To learn more about the Career & Employment Hub and how your organization can get the most out of an internship program, call (207) 228-8091 or email usmcareers@maine.edu.



Alumni at Work

By **Kelly Brewer '11**

Director of Engineering and Implementation, Tilson

In leading the engineering team for all Tilson programs, I oversee the engineering and construction of fiber optic networks, in building networks and utility networks. My team is responsible for engineering and building some of the largest telecom projects happening all over the country. An important part of my role is to foster and drive innovation of network engineering tools and techniques to help us stay competitive.

There are so many things I enjoy about my job. I'm on the forefront of creating industry-leading processes and best practices in the telecom industry. It's rewarding to be able to build and hire teams in Maine (and across the country) to work on impactful projects. Tilson provides a lot of autonomy. It is a supportive, hard-charging culture in which I'm pushed by my team and peers to continuously improve.

USM taught me that a non-traditional path is welcome, and that has carried over to my career. As a student who took courses at night, while working a full-time job, I learned valuable time management skills. USM connected me with local business leaders in the community who have been beneficial as mentors, clients and employees.

By allowing me to teach courses within the Department of Technology, USM has also helped me to connect with and understand the future generation of employees coming into the market. Today, I'm proud to say that my team employs more than a dozen USM alumni, current students and interns.



“USM taught me that a non-traditional path is welcome, and that has carried over to my career.”



Alumni at Work

By **Matthew Pelletier '04**

Director of Consumer Tech, Vets First Choice

I work for Vets First Choice, a fast-growing Portland-based company that provides technology-enabled health care services to the veterinary industry. I've been with the company since its inception and have had a few roles along the way.

This past year, my focus has been engineering management in support of the B2C business, primarily concentrating on digital marketing and ecommerce for veterinary practice customers. I love many things about the company and my role in it – the mission, the entrepreneurial mindset, the people, and the general passion for consumer-facing technology.

Looking back, USM, and more specifically the Department of Computer Science, was instrumental in preparing me for a career in software development. Fundamentally, I learned how to think like an engineer and apply a theoretical foundation to solve problems in a systematic way.

On top of that, I learned to value efficiency and the power of continuous improvement. Interning complemented my academic experience and provided a smooth transition into the Maine professional community. I'm grateful to USM for helping me discover my own path, and also for continuing to produce the kinds of capable engineers necessary to fuel local innovation.



“I’m grateful to USM for helping me discover my own path, and also for continuing to produce the kinds of capable engineers necessary to fuel local innovation.”



Alumni at Work

By **Anne Bartlett '12, '13**

Director of Nursing, Milestone Recovery

I joined Milestone Recovery (formerly Milestone Foundation) in the fall of 2013 as a part-time night RN after graduating from USM's accelerated nursing program. Milestone is a vibrant nonprofit organization in Portland. Our detoxification program is the only non-hospital-based program of its kind in Maine.

Having previously earned a bachelor's degree from USM in health sciences, with a minor in holistic and integrative health, working for a local nonprofit felt like the right fit for me. After serving in multiple roles within the organization, I was honored to be hired as director of nursing in April 2017.

I'm learning and evolving in my position every day. I have been a leader in introducing more evidence-based practices into the detox program, including exposing our staff to motivational interviewing trainings and collaborating with local acupuncturists to provide group treatments to our clients. I'm also involved in implementing a new electronic health record for the program.

As director of nursing, it has been important for me to be a self-starter, creative thinker and a skilled problem solver. USM's structured nursing program allowed me to not only develop my nursing skills, but also the chance to flourish in a professional setting in a leadership role. The faculty within USM's School of Nursing contributed immensely to my practice today. I've been fortunate to remain in contact with many of my teachers. I'm continuously grateful for my time as a USM student and the relationships that I still enjoy today.



“The faculty within USM's School of Nursing contributed immensely to my practice today.”



Alumni at Work

By **Daniel Kleban '04**

Co-Founder, Maine Beer Company

My brother and I started Maine Beer Company (MBC) in 2009 as one of the nation's first "nano-breweries," brewing beer on the weekend, 30 gallons at a time. I'm incredibly proud of my company's growth and the quality of the beer we make, but I'm more proud of the kind of company we always strive to be. My brother and I set out to prove that the bottom line and responsible business practices are not mutually exclusive ideals. They are self-reinforcing – after all, MBC's motto is "do what's right." Each day we work to prove that point.

I did not, however, arrive where I am through happenstance – far from it – and USM played a pivotal role in my personal development. Ten years prior to starting MBC, at the age of 21, I packed up a U-Haul and moved from my native state of Ohio to Maine, in search of new beginnings. I arrived in Maine as a college drop-out without any meaningful path in life. After working manual labor jobs for a couple of years, I decided to finish my education and enrolled at USM. That decision put me on the trajectory toward success.

I graduated USM in 2004 *summa cum laude*, graduated from Boston College Law School, and got my first legal job as an associate at a Portland law firm. In one of life's ironies, it was a partner at this firm who taught me how to brew beer. It was out of that "education" that Maine Beer Company became the brewery it is today.



“After working manual labor jobs for a couple of years, I decided to finish my education and enrolled at USM. That decision put me on the trajectory toward success.”

Students Making a Difference

Melissa Cunningham | Nursing Student

Q: What factors went into your decision to attend USM?

After living in Florida for several years and completing an associate's degree, I decided to move back to Maine with my family. I spoke with several USM alumni friends who highly recommended the university. It was also important to choose a location where I planned to settle and raise my son. USM has proven to be the perfect fit! As a Jack Kent Cooke Scholar, I received funding that allowed me to attend USM, and I was recently named a 2018 Graduate Scholar, which will help me attend graduate school.

Q: How long have you been interested in nursing?

I became interested about 15 years ago when Keri, my sister and role model, enrolled in college and became a registered nurse. In pursuing a career as a nurse practitioner, I've found the balance between my interests in human biology, nursing, psychology, medicine and research.

Q: How has your experience in USM's Bayside Partnership Program and as an intern for Preble Street influenced you?

Bayside Partnership and Preble Street helped me develop my voice in becoming an advocate for vulnerable individuals and communities. I sought out these experiences because as I child I received many of the same social services that can be found in Bayside. I'm passionate about treating individuals who are homeless, experiencing poverty, trauma, mental health challenges and issues of addiction with dignity and respect.



Q: What do you hope to be doing in five years?

I envision myself practicing as a psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner with a focus on underserved communities. I would like to be involved in research and advocacy related to the pathology of substance use disorder.

Q: What is the one thing you would like people to know about USM?

USM is a community that values the strengths that come of interdependence, connection to community, diversity and inclusiveness. All are welcome here!

Hometown and high school:

Brunswick. Attended Brunswick and Portland high schools

Anticipated graduation year at USM: 2018

Major and minor: Nursing major, biology minor, USM Honors Program

Current job: Parent of 7-year-old Travis

“USM is a community that values the strengths that come of interdependence, connection to community, diversity and inclusiveness. All are welcome here!”

Lincoln Kamenides | Computer Science Student

Q: What factors went into your decision to attend USM?

USM offers the Honors Program and several internship opportunities that I was interested in pursuing. The convenience of a college near my home, where I could start my computer science major, appealed to me most. I wanted to be close to home to assist my mom with the care of my 94-year-old great-grandfather.

Q: How long have you been interested in computer science?

I took an intro to computer programming course during high school. As I was learning the basics, I realized I had a natural talent for it, and my interest in computer programming progressed. This newfound interest led me to the decision to major in computer science.

Q: Tell us about your job with the Computing Help Desk? Do you enjoy being a problem-solver for the USM community?

Working at the Computing Help Desk at USM has been a great experience. I have learned to help customers and resolve any issues they may have with their computers. I truly enjoy the opportunity to work within the USM community and the daily learning opportunities it offers.

Q: What do you hope to be doing in five years?

I hope to have graduated with a BS in computer science. My goal is to expand my knowledge of computer



programming languages through my internships, and to work within the field of technology.

Q: What is the one thing you would like people to know about USM?

USM has many great options for students to pursue. There are plenty of scholarships available, on-campus job experiences, as well as opportunities to study abroad and learn about other cultures.

Hometown and High School:
Portland. Attended Haynes Academy and Thornton Academy

Anticipated graduation year at USM: 2021

Major and minor: Computer science major, USM Honors Program

Current job: IT phone agent for USM

“My goal is to expand my knowledge of computer programming languages through my internships, and to work within the field of technology.”



Steve Amendo, vice president for marketing and community engagement, Dr. David Howes, president and CEO at Martin's Point Health Care, and Mikayla Libby Gilbert, USM intern.

Portrait of a Partnership

USM & Martin's Point Health Care

>> The partnership demonstrates USM's focus on preparing students and graduates for success in high-quality jobs, while helping to provide Maine employers with a high-caliber, sustainable workforce.

By Trevor Maxwell

In terms of their career trajectories, Mikayla Libby Gilbert and Dr. David Howes stand at different ends of the spectrum.

Libby Gilbert is just getting started. She's a 21-year-old pre-med student at the University of Southern Maine and works as an intern at Martin's Point Health Care in Portland. Her goal is to become a doctor of osteopathic medicine.

Howes, a career physician, is president and CEO at Martin's Point Health Care, the not-for-profit organization he joined nearly 30 years ago. Through its health insurance plans and health care centers, Martin's Point has grown to serve nearly 200,000 people in the Northeast United States.

But despite the generation gap, the intern and the CEO share the same vision for improving people's health. And they are absolutely on the same page when asked about

the growing partnership between USM and Martin's Point.

"My internship at Martin's Point has been invaluable. The people I'm working with are amazing and the work is so applicable to my major," Libby Gilbert said. "Once they saw what I was capable of, they started to give me more responsibility, so my internship has been a great fit. From my perspective it's a partnership that works for both USM students and for Martin's Point."

Howes could not agree more.

"It is such a nice two-way street. We benefit greatly from the work, tenacity and energy of our USM interns. They have done meaningful work that has helped our patients and health insurance members, while we have provided the real-world experience students are looking for," Howes said. "We see USM as a vital partner for a highly trained workforce, and as an enormously valuable community resource."

While the connections between USM

“We definitely see USM as a pipeline for talent. Ideally, we want to bring someone in as an intern, establish that relationship, and hopefully they will want to work here after they graduate.”

Teresa Nizza, Martin's Point chief HR officer and USM Foundation board member



and Martin's Point stretch back many years, the strategic partnership between the two institutions has just come into focus in the last couple of years. Martin's Point, a member of USM's growing Corporate Partners program, launched a new internship program and job shadow days last summer for USM students.

The partnership demonstrates USM's focus on preparing students and graduates for success in high-quality jobs, while helping to provide Maine employers with a high-caliber, sustainable workforce. Here are the highlights:

- **New Internship Program.** As a result of their positive experiences with USM, Martin's Point designed its first-ever internship program. Six USM students were hired as interns in the summer of 2017, and some have already transitioned into year-round employment. The program expands to 10 interns this summer.
- **New Health Care Job Shadow Days** for USM students each semester. These day-long events provide opportunities for students to see the wide array of clinical and administrative possibilities within the broad field of health care. Job shadow days have been popular with a range of students: those early in their college careers, those who work full time and do not have time for an internship, students nearing graduation, and graduate students.
- **Board Involvement.** George Campbell, former president and CEO of the USM Foundation, served for many years on the Martin's Point Board of Directors. That relationship led to Teresa Nizza, chief HR officer at Martin's Point, joining the USM Foundation Board. Now USM and Martin's Point are looking for other opportunities to engage their leaders on other USM program or departmental advisory boards.

- **Sharing Expertise.** Martin's Point HR professionals with a focus on LEAN/Six Sigma process improvement have volunteered to help streamline and improve the university's internship processes.
- **USM Works for ME Alumni Gatherings.** Martin's Point hosted USM President Glenn Cummings at a gathering for USM alumni and other employees with a tie to the university. The first event included more than 40 attendees. Even Howes was surprised at how many members of his team had a USM connection. A second USM Works for ME event is being planned at Martin's Point for employees this fall.
- **On-Campus Engagement and Philanthropy.** Martin's Point is active in USM's Corporate Partners program; the organization sponsors USM alumni events and career fairs; and many individuals within Martin's Point are volunteers at and donors to the university.

Building a strong internship program

When Nizza joined the USM Foundation Board two years ago, she started considering the possibilities for how her organization could partner with USM. That led to many conversations with Cummings, as well as Campbell and Ainsley L.N. Wallace, then vice-president of the USM Foundation, now president.

Nizza had wanted to establish an internship program since joining Martin's Point in 2011. But in a busy health care organization, she was wary about adding yet another responsibility to employees.

“We hadn't been able to find an educational partner with the right resources and ease of administration so that we could make sure students were appropriately vetted and matched, but that it

“Just day-to-day, being in a medical practice and seeing what goes on, it’s totally different from being in a classroom. Both environments are important for students.”

Mikayla Libby Gilbert,
USM intern at Martin’s Point
Health Care



wouldn’t be burdensome,” Nizza said.

Wallace suggested piloting a program with a small cohort of interns. She reached out to Professor Rebecca Nisetich, director of USM’s growing Honors Program, to help identify the high-achieving students who would thrive as interns at Martin’s Point. Nizza said the first group of interns exceeded the lofty expectations placed upon them.

“The enthusiasm, thirst for knowledge, and desire to contribute were clear right away,” Nizza said. One of the interns’ major tasks was to reach out to Martin’s Point patients about the importance of preventive health. Collectively, the interns communicated with more than 500 patients, many of whom scheduled screenings.

Steve Amendo, vice president for marketing and community engagement at Martin’s Point, agreed that the first year of the internship program was a great success. He credits the organization’s diligent efforts to

make sure that USM interns were engaged in meaningful projects, rather than busy work. They will expand those efforts for the 10 new students who will join Martin’s Point this summer.

“USM students bring a high level of energy and fresh perspectives,” Amendo said. “We have heard over and over from people throughout our organization how much they appreciated that.”

Jobs for USM grads through growth, succession

Through job shadows, internships, and other areas of partnership, one clear goal of this collaboration is to prepare USM graduates for successful careers within the Martin’s Point organization.

Based in Portland, Martin’s Point operates six health care centers in Maine and one in New Hampshire. It also serves health insurance plan members in northern

New England states, New York and Pennsylvania. With more than 800 employees, most of whom work in Maine, and an annual revenue of around \$800 million, Martin’s Point hopes to continue its trajectory of modest growth.

In addition to new jobs created from growth, Martin’s Point will also need to replace employees as they retire or shift into job-sharing or part-time roles. When they heard that more than 75% of USM alumni live and work in Maine after graduation, Howes and Nizza were convinced that USM would be a strategic partner for building a long-term talent pipeline.

“We’re always looking for talented employees, whether they be doctors, nurses or medical assistants for our clinical roles, or in other parts of the organization such as insurance, IT, finance, marketing and HR,” Nizza said.

“In my role, I’m interested in keeping



“USM students bring a high level of energy and fresh perspectives. We have heard over and over from people throughout our organization how much they appreciated that.”

Steve Amendo, vice president for marketing and community engagement

students in Maine. Many want to stay but they lack opportunities. The challenge is, how do we create those? How can we match USM students and graduates with opportunities here at Martin’s Point? I think we are heading in the right direction,” she said.

“We definitely see USM as a pipeline for talent. Ideally, we want to bring someone in as an intern, establish that relationship, and hopefully they will want to work here after they graduate.”

Real-world connections

Libby Gilbert, the aspiring osteopathic doctor and Honors Program student, graduates from USM in May. A native of Sidney, Maine, she would like to continue working for Martin’s Point as she moves into the gap year between USM and medical school. In fact, Martin’s Point is helping her make that transition into medicine. Already, Libby Gilbert has job shadowed

three physicians and has received offers for help with her medical school recommendations, as well.

Most of all, Libby Gilbert is proud of the role she has played in preventive health outreach to Martin’s Point patients over the past year. Starting with outreach for colorectal cancer screening, she has also encouraged patients to schedule breast cancer and bone density screenings. Recently, she has been speaking with patients about the importance of annual physical exams, which have been shown to improve health outcomes.

“I adore my co-workers and the work environment. It has been an awesome mix of clinical and administrative experience,” she said. “Just day-to-day, being in a medical practice and seeing what goes on, it’s totally different from being in a classroom. Both environments are important for students.”

Howes, the Martin’s Point president and

CEO, said there are endless ways for USM and Martin’s Point to collaborate in the future, particularly in the areas of health policy and community education.

“We are a community not-for-profit that needs a trained workforce, and also, to an ever-greater degree, is concerned about the social and economic determinants of health,” he said. “So, for us to interact closely with USM is an enormously beneficial way to multiply our forces and create a stronger, healthier and more vibrant community. That is what gets us up in the morning.”

Howes is also enjoying a personal connection to the university. His son, Luther Howes, is attending USM and plans on majoring in the biological sciences.

“He’s having a fine academic experience in his biology, chemistry and math classes. He’s been challenged, but he’s also been well supported at USM,” Howes said. “USM was a great choice.”

A large cruise ship is shown from a low angle, sailing on the ocean. The ship has a white upper hull and a dark blue lower hull with a red stripe. The sky is clear blue, and the water is dark blue with whitecaps.

Tourism and Hospitality

Cruising toward tourism careers

>> Thanks to a partnership between AAA Northern New England and USM, Tourism and Hospitality students are getting valuable hands-on experience.



Tourism and Hospitality students host a cooking demonstration event with Bermudan chef Jaelen Steede as part of their cruise internship.

By Danielle Vayenas
Office of Public Affairs

The dense blanket of fog covering Casco Bay slowly dissipated, revealing the majestic 18-deck Anthem of the Seas cruise ship, towering far above the crowd eagerly waiting to explore all it had to offer.

Once on board, the group's first tour stop was the ship's expansive Broadway-style theater. Here the audience heard from representatives from the University of Southern Maine's Tourism and Hospitality program, AAA Northern New England and Royal Caribbean International, who shared the latest collaborative effort to provide USM students with real-time internship experiences in the industry.

The tour and a luncheon, held last August aboard the impressive Royal Caribbean cruise ship, was the third such event since 2014, when USM and AAA began their partnership – then with Holland America and its ship, the MS Veendam.

More than 100 AAA members, along with USM faculty and staff, enjoyed the sold-out event, which raised \$6,000 toward scholarships to help students fund their participation in the internship's culminating cruise.

This marks the first time USM and AAA have worked together with Royal Caribbean. Among the company's many staff members who graciously hosted the group during the extensive tours and the luncheon in the ship's restaurant (Chic), were Melissa Ozkurt '91, USM alumna and Royal Caribbean's business



Tourism and Hospitality students in Bermuda (from left to right) Sabrina Crossman '16, Tyler Gamblin '17, Andrew Leighton '17 and Mandy Kidney '11.

development manager. She presented information about the ship and the cruise, and noted how thrilled she was to see her *alma mater* create such an exciting program that offers its students real, behind-the-scenes exposure to her industry.

Tracy Michaud, professor and chair of Tourism and Hospitality (TAH), discussed the importance of this program to not only USM's students, but also to the local tourism industry. *The Portland Press Herald* reported in early March that Maine's hospitality industry reached new revenue highs last year, bringing in \$3.8

billion as the state continues to attract more tourists. Roughly 1 million more people visited Maine during last year's summer season, and overnight stays jumped about 8 percent, according to an estimate by DPA, a Portland-based research firm that studies tourism trends for the state.

Maine is also becoming ever-more important for cruise ship ports of call. Portland was rated as one of the top-five favorite ports by Royal Caribbean's passengers. During the 2017 season, cruise lines sent more than 145,000 visitors to the city (with 172,000 projected in 2018),

and more than 400,000 visitors statewide.

AAA's Eric Baxter, who has worked closely with USM interns, told the crowd, "A huge part of AAA's business is travel and tourism, so we're always looking for energetic talent to help us. USM has been a perfect fit, and we've even hired two of our interns as full-time employees here."

Andrew Leighton '17 is one of the former interns who now works for AAA – he started his job in January 2017. He was on board to present information to the group about the internship during the luncheon event, and he shared his cruise experience as an intern in 2016 on the Veendam.

As part of the cruise capstone, several paid interns are hired by AAA Northern New England to market the cruise to prospective travelers, and also create and manage a special shore excursion for the AAA passengers aboard the cruise.

In 2016, the students who went on the cruise not only hosted a special event (which was a Bermuda "Foodie Tour" with Chef Jaelen Steede), they also managed a media campaign, researched the Bermuda cruise tourist market and explored the island as travelers themselves, all while learning about the local culture.

"In the past several years, we've been so privileged to work with AAA Northern New England," said Michaud. "They've been an excellent community partner. Their staff have been fully engaged with our students, helping them to learn all the ins and outs of the travel and tourism industry."

Two USM Tourism and Hospitality students, Heather Rock and Caroline Paras are this year's AAA interns who, along with several other students, will be traveling to Bermuda on the Anthem of the Seas May 26-31.



From left: Eric Baxter, AAA Northern New England's director of travel marketing, Tracy Michaud, USM professor and chair of Tourism and Hospitality, Andrew Leighton '17, AAA Northern New England, and Melissa Ozkurt '91, business manager for Royal Caribbean.

"My internship with AAA has opened up a whole new world that allows me to take these skills to the next level – international. Leading a tour is definitely more than writing a great script. I've learned you have to connect with your customers one-on-one to show them that you care about their passions and dreams," said Paras.

"It is partnerships like this that give our TAH students real-world experience and a chance for international travel management. In this global world we live in, these learning experiences are extremely valuable. Even better, we have a number of the AAA interns who work full time for them now," said Sara Ghezzi, the USM faculty member who will lead the 2018 cruise experience.

Anthem of the Seas is fairly new, having launched in 2015. The ship holds around 4,900 passengers and 1,400 crew members. Among other amenities, the

touring group was introduced to three theaters (one being so high tech it cost as much to build as the very first Royal Caribbean cruise ship); several pools; a sports court area that can be set up for basketball, roller skating, or even bumper cars; a full luxury spa; many shops; a casino; and multiple restaurants offering a wide variety of dining, including one from renowned chef Jamie Oliver.

The ship also offers unique experiences that include a robotic bartender; a wave pool where passengers can surf; a skydiving simulator; and the North Star observation tower, where people can enter a glass-walled capsule that rises far above the ship for a 360-degree, eagle-eye view.

Michaud said the MS Veendam experience was terrific for USM's students, but the sheer magnitude of the Royal Caribbean Quantum Class ship, will offer them a much broader experience, both as passengers and behind the scenes.

USM's Tourism and Hospitality program is designed to develop a creative, innovative workforce that will sustain and grow Maine's leading industry. Based in the College of Management and Human Service, the multidisciplinary program currently offers a Bachelor of Arts in tourism and hospitality, featuring a broad array of courses, specialized concentrations in key skills areas and popular subjects, and faculty whose expertise touches on many aspects of tourism and hospitality.

The program has articulation agreements with Southern Maine Community College, Eastern Maine Community College, York County Community College and Kennebec Valley Community College so students can more easily transition from a two-year program to a four-year degree.

USM's Tourism and Hospitality Program features the following:

Curriculum includes a combination of courses in business, planning, recreation and environment.

Courses are taught by a core of USM faculty and qualified experts with extensive experience in the tourism industry.

Courses are available both on campus during day and evening hours and in online and blended formats.

Professional experiences, including internships and practicums, provide critical, real-world experience for students in various aspects of tourism.

Students are engaged in high-level, hands-on training from experts in the field. Internships and active learning within the community prepare students for real-world challenges and give those working in the field a broader range of experience and the opportunity to create stronger professional networks.

Data Innovation Project

Helping nonprofits put data to work

By Trevor Maxwell and Liz Woodbury

If the thought of data collection methods, or even a simple Excel spreadsheet makes you nervous, Sarah Goan, a research associate at the Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy, wants you to take a deep breath. She wants you to face your fear of data.

“I’m a self-professed data nerd who spends a lot of time getting people to not be afraid of data, if not to love it,” she says. “People often end up loving it.”



Goan is one of eight talented researchers who constitute the team at the Data Innovation Project (DIP) at the University of Southern Maine. Launched in 2016, the project is housed within the Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service and is currently funded by the Maine Economic Improvement Fund.

While the work of the DIP can get pretty technical, the core mission of Goan and her colleagues is actually quite simple: They help organizations use data effectively to tell their stories in a meaningful way.

That mission is particularly relevant to the large community of nonprofit organizations in Maine. More than ever, foundations and other funding sources are asking



Data Innovation Project team member Sarah Goan, a research associate at the Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy, speaks at the organization's 2017 summit “Data Demystified: Practice Ways to Use Data to Inform Your Work.” Her presentation was “A Framework for Building a Data-informed Organization.”

nonprofits for advanced data and analytics to demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs. For some organizations, especially the smaller ones or recent start-ups, this can feel like an overwhelming task.

The DIP advises that working with data is usually less complicated, less time consuming, and less expensive than people expect.

“People sometimes just need help in

understanding priorities and finding clarity around what they need to be doing. Sometimes they don’t know what type of information they should be collecting, or they’re not collecting it in a useful way, or they don’t know what to do with the information after they have it,” Goan says.

“We always start with the basics. What is the goal of the data collection, how does

“Talking with folks from DIP provided so much clarification! Just one conversation changed our perspective significantly.”

Kelli McCannell, executive director of Hardy Girls Healthy Women

it tell the story of your organization? The building block of being data-informed is having clarity about what you do.”

When people feel confused or insecure, Goan brings them back to this concept: “You’re not lacking skills or incentives — what you’re lacking is vision.”

A case study: DIP in action

Since 1905, the nonprofit organization Maine Seacoast Mission has brought services ranging from housing, food and medical care to after-school programs and scholarships to residents of Downeast coastal and island communities. Beginning in early 2017, the DIP spent a year collaborating with the Mission, in part to help it articulate a vision.

Scott Planting, president of the Maine Seacoast Mission, had been contemplating how best to measure the success of the mission’s largest program, the EdGE (Ed Greaves Education) after-school youth enrichment program. Planting says, “We asked ourselves, ‘Are we making any impact on these kids?’ Other than anecdotal stories, we just didn’t know — and we didn’t know how to measure it.”

A grant from the John T. Gorman Foundation made the collaboration with DIP possible. According to Goan, the Mission needed an impact statement that would simply assert, “Here is the problem, here is what we do, and here are results.”

Ann Halkett, the Seacoast Mission’s project specialist, says, “There’s such a gap between thinking that we should have some data and knowing how to get it — and that’s where the DIP was just amazing.”

What began as one overwhelming idea evolved into clear and achievable goals.

“Our giant concept was ‘solving poverty in Eastern Maine.’ The DIP helped us break that down into pieces we could



Tae Chong '98', 80' speaks at the Data Innovation Project's 2017 summit "Data Demystified: Practice Ways to Use Data to Inform Your Work."

tackle,” says Planting. Once his team had articulated specific goals for short, medium and long-term outcomes, “We were able to say, ‘*This* is what we’re trying to do.’”

Supporting local nonprofits

Each month, the DIP holds three free data clinics, which are advertised on DIP’s website and in the Maine Association of Nonprofits newsletter. These clinics are held in various locations around the state of Maine and have proven to be extremely popular.

“We’ve worked with more than 30 nonprofit organizations through the data

clinics alone,” says Goan, “as well as with some small businesses, municipalities and libraries.”

The clinics provide two hours of personalized support around any data-related issue that organizations are facing, an hour of follow-up, and individualized notes and resources. Goan estimates that each group receives about five hours of free support altogether.

The nonprofit organization Hardy Girls Healthy Women describes itself as “dedicated to the health and well-being of girls and women.” When they enrolled in a DIP data clinic, staff members were concerned about their ability to collect data and do a

“I’m a self-professed data nerd who spends a lot of time getting people to not be afraid of data, if not to love it. People often end up loving it.”

Sarah Goan, research associate in the Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service

long-term, rigorous evaluation of that data.

Kelli McCannell, executive director of HGHW, puts it this way: “As people who love numbers, we’d been grappling with how to best evaluate and then express our program with them.”

The DIP data clinics often begin with the questions: “Who are you? What are you? What’s your mission? What do you want to talk about?” Once these are answered, the goal is to zero in on a specific topic.

For Hardy Girls Healthy Women, that meant addressing their concern about long-term data research.

“We showed them they could use existing findings and research to bolster their own data. For example, if their surveys showed a positive outcome, they could connect that with the existing literature,” explains Goan.

Simply matching their own definitive survey results to that literature would be sufficient. The organization would not be expected to do its own long-term outcome research.

“It was like a breath of fresh air” for the organization, says Goan.

McCannell agrees: “Talking with folks from DIP provided so much clarification! Just one conversation changed our perspective significantly.”

As a direct result of their work with the DIP, Hardy Girls Healthy Women has “simplified the evaluation process, tied it to statewide and other extensive evaluations, and even adapted programming.”

Maintaining the humanity behind data

When it comes to helping organizations use data effectively, there are bound to be barriers along the way. In addition to the intimidation factor, Goan points to the common belief that only specially trained researchers are capable of working with data.



Erin Oldham, Data Innovation Project founding director, at the 2017 summit “Data Demystified: Practice Ways to Use Data to Inform Your Work.”

Planting describes the idea of data collection as “a hard sell” at first. “The staff weren’t exactly thrilled!” They were unclear what exactly would be measured and worried the process would be complicated. “Sarah (Goan) was so approachable and enthusiastic, though,” he says. “We’re huge fans of the DIP!”

Another hurdle to overcome is the fear “that data doesn’t tell the whole story and can lose the complexity of human experience,” according to Goan. After all, no one wants to be reduced to a data point.

These anxieties are allayed by the DIP’s emphasis on stories being “data-informed,”

using testimonials and anecdotes that expand on the data while maintaining the humanity behind it. “Data will never replace the human aspect, but when they’re used together, you can be far more effective,” says Goan.

As far as the future, it looks bright to the team at the DIP. According to Goan, the organization’s goals include an expansion to additional sectors, including more municipalities and small businesses, while continuing the mission-driven work that comprises the beating heart of the DIP.



A BRIGHT IDEA

Engineering students put skills to work

>> USM engineering students help to develop real-life lighting efficiencies at Portland Public Library.

By Daniel Hartill
Office of Public Affairs

In a wide, lower-level room of the Portland Public Library — far away from the Congress Street cafe and the main entry's warm, natural light — four University of Southern Maine engineering students bathed in fluorescent yellow.

Paul Tetzlaff, the library's security and maintenance director, pointed up and frowned.

"We had a major renovation in 2010, but the lighting here was never enough," Tetzlaff told the students. Work was focused on the most-seen common areas. And while the reference area remains inviting, shelves in the room were either re-arranged or removed to give the room an open and airy feel.

Lighting was a hodgepodge.

"They just kind of dropped them into the ceiling, not knowing what our layout was going to be," Tetzlaff said. "It's inefficient. The light bulbs, 245 in this one room alone, are old, frequently burn out and contribute to a library-wide electric bill that can reach \$12,000 per month."

The four students — Spencer Brown, R.J. Chamberland, Alias Nasrat and Sam Edmondson — quietly listened and absorbed the information.

Their job, part of a service-learning initiative that is giving engineering students real-world experience as consultants to several area nonprofit organizations, is to help the library save money and improve its lighting at the same time.

Another group of engineering students

“These service learning projects are critical to their education. Many of these students have paid internships with local companies, which is good. Here, I am trying to simulate with this experience what it would be like for them to be consulting engineers.”

Ivan Most, adjunct associate professor of Mechanical Engineering



Engineering students (left to right) R.J. Chamberland, Alias Nasrat, Sam Edmondson and Spencer Brown examine lighting inside Portland Public Library with Paul Tetzlaff, the library's security and maintenance director.

is working on finding low-cost ways of lighting the tennis courts at Windham High School. One is working with USM's Office of Sustainability to find a low-cost, efficient way of heating a Portland campus building in need of renovation. Other groups are working with Maine Health, Southern Maine Health Care and Goodwill of Northern New England.

For the groups, the projects provide opportunities to receive valuable information that can translate to real savings.

"I think it could be significant for us," said George Cooper, the library's director of finance. For an institution that has a \$4.5 million budget, the possibility of saving thousands of dollars or even tens of thousands in electricity costs is considerable, he said.

He was also pleased to work with the USM students.

"The library is really a place where this kind of idea is cherished," he said.

For the students, it's a chance to learn one of the skills that engineers need, serving a client.

"It's taking what we learn in class and using it in the real world," student Spencer Brown said.

Such experiences are "absolutely critical," said Ivan Most, an adjunct associate professor of Mechanical Engineering.

"This is a class that covers more than the calculus and physics and chemistry of engineering," Most said. "It covers the business."

"You can't get this in the classroom," he said. "You just can't. It's impossible. These service learning projects are critical to their

education. Many of these students have paid internships with local companies, which is good. Here, I am trying to simulate with this experience what it would be like for them to be consulting engineers."

Students and representatives of the agencies sign an agreement to work together until their consultation is complete, establishing a work goal for the student teams.

The effort and the ability to work together in teams is critical, Most said. It will help prepare them for the workplace.

"The concept of the lone wolf going out there and coming up with a great idea doesn't happen," Most said. "It really comes with people working together and putting in the perspiration to get the inspiration. It's the only way it's going to work."



The new community clinic at the Lewiston campus will provide a variety of therapies for pediatric clients. Equipment was donated by a private practice.

USM's new Occupational Therapy community clinic

Learning by helping

By **Daniel Hartill**
Office of Public Affairs

The Parkinson's disease that rocked Roland Morin's balance and shrank his movement seemed to ease as he stepped into a hallway at the University of Southern Maine's Lewiston campus.

Morin knew that his aide — Master of Occupational Therapy student Kelsey Covert — would help him if he teetered. He smiled and leaned forward as Covert followed, gently steadying him with her hands at his waist.

They reached the hall's end again and again.

"I am seeing improvement," Covert said later. "And it's so rewarding."

Her experience is part of a new initiative aimed at giving the occupational therapy students authentic, real-world experience in the field, while still being guided by faculty.

Eventually, all of the popular program's 70-plus students will get the chance to be part of a new free clinic at the campus. Working with Lewiston-area physicians and therapists, the just-created USM-LAC Community Clinic will offer specialized therapy to people who either have no in-



USM student Rita Goodwin demonstrates a body movement for a client at USM's community clinic on the Lewiston Campus.

surance or have exhausted their benefits.

In this first case, three students who have been certified in the Parkinson's treatment protocol known as "LSVT Big" are working with two men with the disease. For them, the disease created

the misperception that they are moving regularly when their actual movement has been reduced. Sometimes their footsteps have faded to shuffles.

"We teach the men to think big," said Mary Anderson, the clinic's coordinator and

Opening celebration

In March, the University of Southern Maine's Lewiston-Auburn College celebrated the official opening of the new community clinic, offering free occupational therapy care to a variety of patients.

More than 100 people attended including members of the faculty, LAC's Community Advisory Board, the Lewiston City Council, the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and representatives for Rep. Bruce Poliquin and Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King.

"Congratulations on a lot of hard work," said Rebecca Swanson Conrad, the chamber's president and CEO. "This clinic is an example of what I always associate with this institution, which is innovation, excellence and leadership."

The new clinic, which has been operating since January with a few students and patients, offers free occupational therapy care to a variety of patients. Students in the graduate-level occupational therapy program have the opportunity to learn about real-world care



The new community clinic officially opened on March 9.

under the supervision of faculty from the highly competitive program. Joyce Gibson, LAC's former dean and current faculty member, praised the work of everyone involved, including Mary Anderson, the clinic's coordinator and a lecturer in the program.

"We couldn't be more proud because the faculty and clinicians are the heart of our program," Gibson said. "We want to thank you. We really appreciate what you do for us."

- By Daniel Hartill

a lecturer in the program. "We work with them on big, exaggerated movements." The protocol calls for four weeks of therapy. They began improving in just days.

Morin, who traveled the 45 minutes from his home in Livermore to Lewiston, said he was grateful.

"It's a haul but, it's worth it," he said. "This is extremely beneficial."

For Anderson, the clinic is something she's wanted for the program since her arrival at USM in 2015.

The change has been done with little cost. Lewiston-Auburn College moved its writing center to a corner of its library and occupational therapy moved in. One segment includes a variety of child-oriented equipment, donated by Anderson from the private clinic she previously ran. Other tools, including an ultrasound machine, are on the way.

"We'll be able to run the gamut with pediatrics – sensory integration therapy, fine motor skills training and social skills training," Anderson said.

The program has already proven popu-

“These students who are here are developing programs. . . . I think it’s going to make them highly competitive out there in the workforce.”

Mary Anderson, community clinic coordinator

lar, drawing far more applicants than can be admitted. Anderson believes the clinic will make the program even more sought after, for both incoming students and employers.

"I believe it will help graduates find work in the field," Anderson said.

That is part of the reason for the clinic's creation, which was led by an eight-student group.

"These students who are here are developing programs," she said. "They are looking at policies and procedures. They are doing so many of the inner workings. I think it's going to make them highly competitive out there in the workforce."

It's a growing field. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of jobs for occupational therapists is projected to grow 21 percent during the decade from 2016 to 2026.

Students are entering the field to help people. And the clinic is charging no one.

"What's really great about this is we're not billing any insurance," Anderson said. "It's student led, student-run and pro-bono."

Student Rita Goodwin, who worked alongside Covert with Morin, said she was grateful for the chance to work with a patient.

She put a lot of lectures and reading to the test.

"It's a great opportunity, right here on our campus," she said. "It's hands on. You don't get this in the classroom."



**Listening
Lessons with
Adam Ayan**

**Grammy Award-winning instructor
inspires USM students**



“I truly learn a lot from my students and gain a perspective from them that opens my mind and ears in ways that differ from what I do daily in my mastering studio.”

Adam Ayan, mastering engineer at Gateway Mastering Studios and USM adjunct faculty member

By Kathryn Letellier
USM Public Affairs intern

When you think of the University of Southern Maine School of Music, you probably think of memorable live performances by the school’s accomplished students and faculty. Now you can also think of the professional recording side of music thanks to a nationally recognized expert who is teaching cutting-edge courses in digital music production.

As mastering engineer at Gateway Mastering Studios in Portland, Adam Ayan has shared his knowledge with students at the University’s School of Music for 18 years, teaching courses on the recording and editing process of digital audio.

Ayan, a mastering pioneer, has worked on 42 Grammy Award-winning projects, won numerous Grammy Awards, and received many nominations. He worked on two 2018 Grammy winners: Shakira’s album *El Dorado*, which won Best Latin Pop Album, and Reba McEntire’s album *Sing It Now: Songs of Faith & Hope*, which won Best Roots Gospel Album.

In addition to these artists, Ayan has worked with popular musicians such as Paul McCartney, Carrie Underwood, Katy Perry, Bruce Springsteen, Madonna, the Foo Fighters and the Rolling Stones.

“As a mastering engineer, what I love most is that I have a creative hand in improving the sonics of an entire recording,”

he says. “I am the last creative step in the process of making a recording, and get to hear the recording as a whole, and improve upon it as a whole. That is very satisfying to me creatively.”

Though not all artists attend the mastering sessions of their work, Ayan recounts a time when he worked with one of his industry favorites.

“As a young musician I was a huge Rush fan, and in fact, my very first concert experience as a teenager was a Rush show at the Worcester Centrum. Approximately 10 years after that experience I was not only mastering a project for them, but Alex Lifeson himself was in the room with me (mastering). It was a very gratifying experience!” he says.

Ayan’s enthusiasm carries into the classroom. “I truly learn a lot from my students and gain a perspective from them that opens my mind and ears in ways that differ from what I do daily in my mastering studio,” he says.

Bobby Dall, a fourth-year media studies major says he was surprised to hear Ayan on one of his favorite podcasts over the summer (unstoppablerecordingmachine).

“I actually heard him on a producing podcast, and I thought he was so cool and then he started talking about teaching at USM and I was like, hey I’m taking that class.”

A frequent speaker at national industry events, Ayan says it was his interest

in engaging with like-minded people that made him interested in teaching at a university.

His Intro to Digital Audio and Music Production course is open to students of all majors, though a musical background is strongly encouraged. Throughout the course, Ayan inspires students by sharing stories of his work as a mastering engineer and takes students on a tour of his professional workspace at Gateway Mastering Studios.

Of his intro class, Ayan says, “The goal is to not only teach students how to record, but also to provide a solid foundation of the principles of audio. I firmly believe that learning those principles will make my students better recordists all around, and allow them to grow their recording skill set over time.”

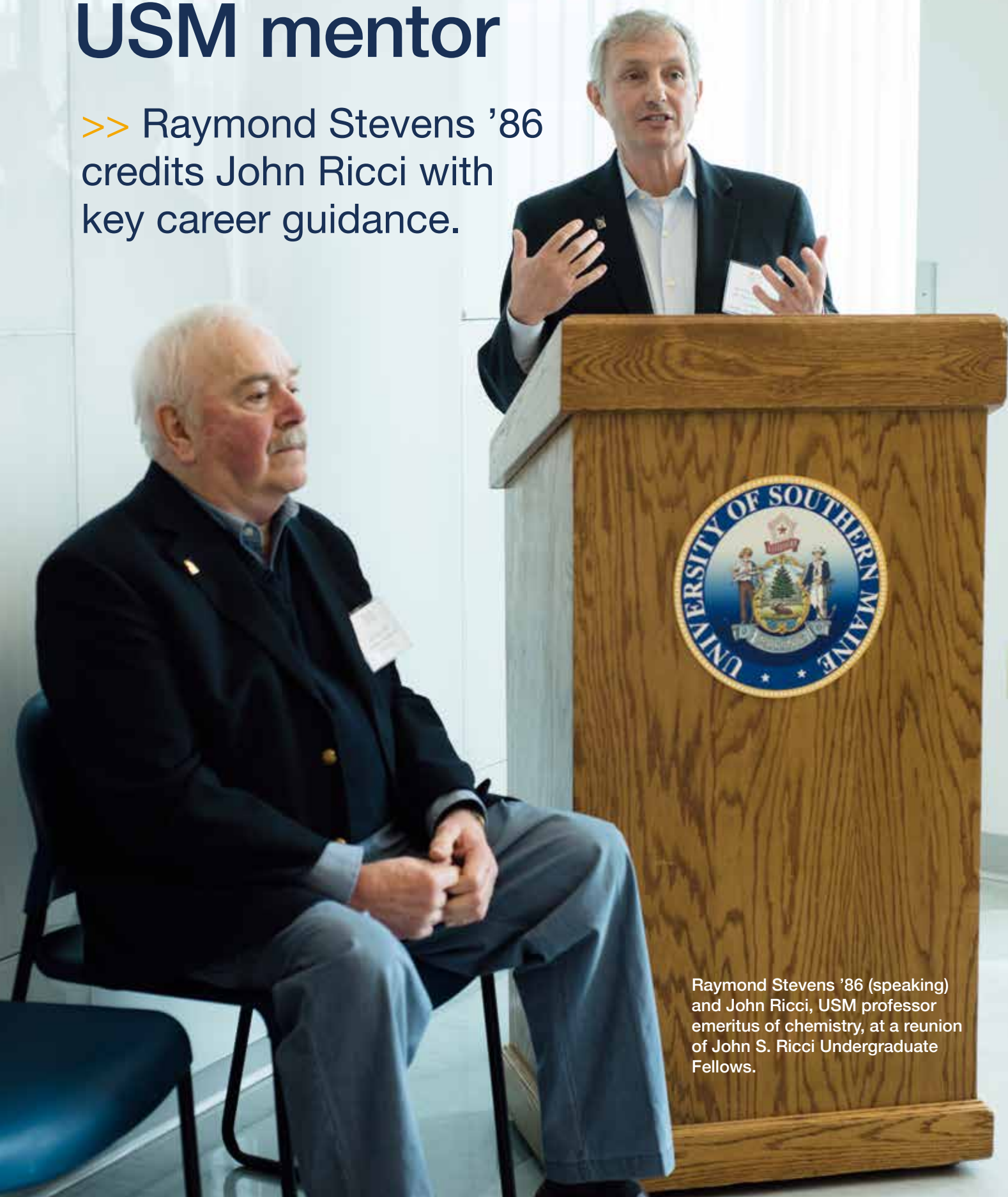
For students like Dall, Ayan’s class is a step toward a successful career in music.

“I can think of a few students that have gone on to work professionally in audio and recording. They are Ian Cushman, Katie Gilchrest ’10 and Jordan Dube ’17. Many, many more of my students have gone on to be professional musicians,” Ayan says.

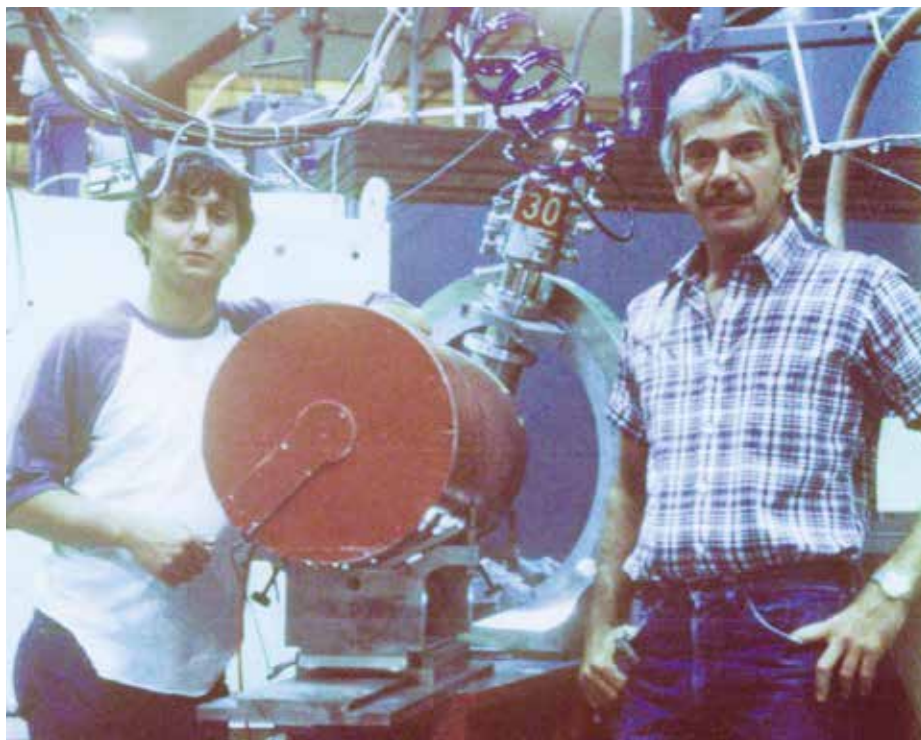
As someone who has taken the class, I can say that it is one not to miss. The stories he shares are fascinating. The class trip to Gateway Mastering Studios, where we got to see his awards, was a day that I won’t forget.

Renowned chemist honors USM mentor

>> Raymond Stevens '86
credits John Ricci with
key career guidance.



Raymond Stevens '86 (speaking)
and John Ricci, USM professor
emeritus of chemistry, at a reunion
of John S. Ricci Undergraduate
Fellows.



Raymond Stevens '86, then a USM student, and John Ricci, his professor and advisor at Brookhaven Laboratory in 1984. Stevens says he was inspired by access to Brookhaven's equipment and by how helpful people at the lab were to him.

“What John Ricci did for me, I wanted to duplicate for others. So I used what resources I have, giving students exposure to equipment and people in a welcoming environment.”

Raymond Stevens '86

Raymond Stevens has honored John Ricci with named fellowship & lecture hall

As a renowned chemist whose pioneering work has been essential for important pharmaceutical drug development, Raymond Stevens '86 knows the power of mentorship. He points to John Ricci, USM professor emeritus of chemistry, as a key reason for his successful career as a scientist who now runs his own lab at the University of Southern California.

“The value of mentors is priceless,” says Stevens, speaking about both the impact of Ricci on his career path and about the importance of mentors in the lives of all students. “When you start college you are looking for direction. You are exploring. Having a dialogue with someone who is experienced and willing to help and to provide advice really helps to shape one’s life. Having a conversation has the potential to set the direction of your life. I never thought that I was going to become a scientist when I started college. When I was a young struggling student, the discussions with John Ricci helped me a lot. This is the power of a good mentor and professor.”

Stevens’ career has followed an impressive path. Among the highlights contained in his weighty CV: scores of publications; professional accolades; a molecular biology

and chemistry professorship at The Scripps Research Institute; founding director of the iHuman Institute in Shanghai; and the launch of six biotech startups from his laboratory. He is currently USC’s Provost Professor of Biological Sciences and Chemistry and director of the USC Bridge Institute.

In 2006 to support USM science students and to recognize Ricci’s impact, Stevens established the John S. Ricci Undergraduate Fellowship, which funds internships at Stevens’ lab for one or two USM chemistry, biochemistry, biology, or physics majors each summer. In April of this year at a 10th anniversary celebration of the Ricci Fellowship, Stevens further honored Ricci via the announcement of his and his wife Vivian Ureña-Stevens’ support for the new John S. Ricci Lecture Hall. The lecture hall, located in the Science Building on the Portland campus, will receive state-of-the-art design and technology upgrades.

Stevens is passionate about why he has honored Ricci, who retired in 2001, and why he wants to provide current students with opportunities similar to those that he had as a student in the 80s, such as his chance to work with Ricci at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, a national lab primarily funded by the U.S. Department of Energy.

“I got to work inside a nuclear reactor – that is something that is so great,” says Stevens. “At the time that I was a struggling student, John asked me whether I wanted to go to Brookhaven in the summer to conduct scientific research. At Brookhaven I was inspired by the equipment that I was able to use and by being around a lot of really smart people who were nice and helpful to me. (Until Brookhaven) I didn’t know a lot about the research area or about working with really cool, powerful scientific instruments.”

Ricci recognizes the importance of Stevens’ Brookhaven experience.

“It opened his eyes to what could be part of his future,” Ricci says. “It was exposure to possibilities. He was impressed by the scale of the laboratory experience. Because Brookhaven is a national lab, it has facilities that most universities do not have. In our case it was the nuclear research reactor.

“Very often traditional lab work for chemistry students is circumscribed. You already know what the outcome is, and you are expected to go through a series of steps to see if you can approach the expected value or experience. The better experience it seems to me is that instead of a cookbook lab, one has the chance to do a little original work. It needs to be exposure to something that



From left, USM President Glenn Cummings, John Ricci, USM professor emeritus of chemistry, scientist Raymond Stevens '86 and Stevens' wife Vivian Ureña-Stevens

nobody else has done before. That brings a little bit of excitement. That's where the mentor fits in. Most of the work we did at Brookhaven that summer was new every step of the way."

Through the fellowship and the new lecture hall, Stevens' goal is to expose USM students to inspiring equipment, people and ideas.

"What John Ricci did for me, I wanted to duplicate for others," says Stevens. "So I used what resources I have, giving students exposure to equipment and people in a welcoming environment."

His effort is having an impact, as evidenced by the trajectory of Ian Slaymaker '07, a 2007 Ricci Fellow.

"The Ricci Fellowship removed the hurdles to world-class science, providing resources and intellectual freedom," says Slaymaker. "It was a ton of fun, and we were able to publish a paper on the research. It helped make the decision to go all-in on a career in science an easy one. I went to get my Ph.D. at the University

of Southern California, and with the Ricci experience under my belt I finished my degree quickly and went for my postdoc at MIT, working on CRISPR genome editing, which I think is the most exciting field in science right now. The fellowship started it all for me, and I couldn't be happier that it's still going strong."

Looking to the future, Slaymaker, who recently became an assistant professor of neuroscience at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, hopes to continue the USM legacy that began with Ricci.

"It's been 10 years since I was a Ricci Fellow and Ray continues to advise me, help my career and teach me how to cook a lemon Cornish hen recipe he learned from John Ricci," he says. "Because of his experience with John Ricci and my experience with Ray, I'm looking forward to my opportunity to take a chance on enthusiastic students who might have otherwise fallen through the cracks. I start my own lab in the next few months (combining structural biology, neuroscience and genome editing)

and I'm going to continue the tradition of helping others, especially those from Maine."

For Stevens, his support of science at USM is simple. It's giving back.

"Both the Ricci program and USM are about exploring how one wants to spend his or her life, and the academic training to accomplish those goals," he says. "The Ricci program was created to provide USM science students the opportunity to explore another place in the world for the summer and to explore new science that they might be interested in considering for a career. Such an experience changed my life through exposing me to new and interesting areas, and I want to give back by making this same opportunity available to others."

For Ricci, the evolution of his USM legacy is satisfying.

"Mostly, it's a great feeling of pride," he says. "I don't normally tell people about this, but I feel a lot of inner satisfaction that my experience with a student has blossomed into something that is amazing."

Students cataloging WWI monuments

By **Daniel Hartill**
Office of Public Affairs

To Libby Bischof, Maine's World War I monuments — statues and obelisks, tablets and tableaus — are the forgotten remnants of a forgotten war. They decorate city halls and cemeteries. They sit astride public parks. And they hide in plain sight.

"We don't always pay attention to the historical landscape that we live in, mostly because it is familiar to us," said Bischof, an associate professor of history.

Beginning in 2014, she began sending her students across Maine to document as many of the monuments as they could find.



Libby Bischof, associate professor of history

Their collection of photos and accompanying archival information have become the backbone of a still-growing repository, the Maine World War I Memorial Inventory.

The database includes memorials from dozens of Maine cities and towns. Among them are one each from Gorham and Lewiston and seven from Portland.

The images and data were collected by students and Bischof, beginning with her World War I Culture, Politics and Memory class.

"I like to do hands-on work with my classes," Bischof said. "I like them to contribute to something of greater lasting impact than just writing essays, which I have them do too."

Interest in the monuments increased during the centennial of WWI. The fighting ended on Nov. 11, 1917 on "the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month." The war cost 16 million lives.

"I think the centennial has really been the impetus for a lot of people in this country to see these monuments and the shape they're in," Bischof said. "I also saw this as kind of an extension of my work in public history."

With each monument comes a little sleuthing.

"Every time I go to a new place, I take the back way," Bischof said. "You look by the town hall. You look by the library. You look in the cemeteries."

While some monuments are better known — such as the grand tableau on Route 1 in Kittery — many have settled into the background.

Often, Bischof and her students hunted for monuments by getting in their cars and roaming.

"You're looking for something that you think exists, but you're not sure it does," she said. "Not every town has one."

And sometimes, even the experts don't know.

For instance, Bischof was driving along Route 1 in a small town and pulled over.

"They have a nice, big memorial right in front of the town offices," she said. She then went inside for more information.

"I asked, 'Do you have any more World War I monuments in the



A WWI monument in front of Carthage Union Church, Carthage, Maine.

town?" Bischof recalled.

"No, we don't think so," the town worker replied.

Bischof climbed back into her car and into the slow-moving summer traffic.

"I looked out of my car window and saw another monument on the green," she said. "People don't pay as much attention to monuments and landmarks as they should."

And some monuments don't seem like monuments.

"They're not always a statue with a stone or a plaque," she said. "The living trees along Baxter Boulevard in Portland's Back Cove are a memorial."

Bischof and her students' work resides online within the USM Digital Commons. It has also been added to a national database.

Often, the discovery ends with reading a list of names on a tablet and recalling why they were set in stone.

"You read these names and think about their sacrifices," she said. "You think about how they left their homes and their families. I wasn't prepared for how powerful it is."

McCann's goal is to support fellow veterans

By Daniel Hartill
Office of Public Affairs

To USM student Rob McCann, life has been a long, long march. As a boots-on-the-ground Marine, he trekked across the Afghan city of Marjah, carrying rockets amid the war's single biggest offensive. As a veteran, he hiked the 2,200-mile Appalachian Trail, raising money in the memory of a fallen Marine comrade.

And he found his own peace.

"I have certainly tried to live my life in a way which honors some of my friends who aren't here anymore," said McCann, 28. "I try to give back to a community and a country I care about and watched people die to defend. I think that's where my interest in politics stems from."

He spent the last two and a half years working for Rep. Chellie Pingree as her veterans constituent services representative. In September 2017, he began studying political science at USM.

He knows that too will be a challenge.

"There's a welcomeness here," McCann said. "They've been so helpful. But I have a lot of work to do."

At 19, he'd fled classroom life at Nova Scotia's Acadia University. Halfway through his first semester he drove home to Maine and enlisted in the Marines.

He requested the infantry to ensure he'd see combat. He got his wish.

McCann joined "Operation Moshtarak," also known as the Battle of Marjah, shortly after he arrived in southern Afghanistan. His team was tasked with clearing the Taliban-held city.

"We dropped in on one side, and we walked to the other side," McCann said. "And we did that for 90 days straight."

The city had mine fields, improvised explosive devices and a variety of other booby traps.

"I got to experience all that war has to offer the 21st century fighter," he said. "It was exactly what I thought I wanted."

During that first deployment, his role was mostly carrying rockets and small arms. When he returned to Afghanistan, he led his own 15-man team. After his third deployment, he was honorably discharged in November 2012 and returned home.

He had to relearn how to feel and experience everyday life.

"Obviously, I had some pretty bad expe-



riences in the Middle East," he said. Two weeks into his first deployment, his best friend, Kyle Coutu, was killed. Others followed.

"Five of my friends died in 2010, and I didn't shed a single tear," he said. "My emotions had become emotionless."

But following his discharge, he met with Kyle's family. Then, McCann and a friend began fundraising for a charity Kyle's parents created, eventually raising more than \$30,000. McCann and his friend started hiking the Appalachian Trail.

"It was a chance to clear my head and find a new balance in my life," he said. "I was a little angry and a little flustered and just confused by the last five years."

Mile after mile, he felt better. On the summit of Mt. Katahdin – the northern end of the trail – he cried.

"My eyes produced tears for the first time in five years," he said. "It brought empathy back into my life."

Soon, he began working with the homeless at Preble Street in Portland. He then went to work with Veterans Inc. And when he had the chance to do the same kind of work for Rep. Pingree, through the national Wounded Warrior Fellowship Program, he applied and was accepted.

Work ranged from helping veterans and their dependents navigate the Pentagon and

VA bureaucracies to awarding medals that had been earned but never received. Occasionally, they worked on legislation.

In one instance, the young Congressional staffer went above and beyond. After a ceremony at the Togus VA complex, a 92-year-old WWII veteran collapsed with a heart attack. McCann jumped to his aid, administering CPR until paramedics arrived.

The action drew praise from Pingree on the House floor.

"I couldn't be more proud of the work that Rob does in our office every day – and I am especially proud of his quick response to save the life of a fellow veteran," Pingree said.

The Congresswoman's thanks were "humbling," McCann said. "I just happened to be one of a couple of people who helped," he said.

Helping veterans led McCann to USM. He plans to use his political science education to help him continue to find work that helps veterans.

McCann, himself, says he's a happy man. Aiding others is part of that. He also married about a year after his return. Meanwhile, he is reluctant to make a fuss over his own service.

"I was part of a large contingent of people who responded to a bell that America rang," he said.

From tank to table: Aquaponics research



At work in the aquaponics system in the newly renovated greenhouse on the USM Gorham campus.

By Alan Bennett
Office of Public Affairs

Last autumn, the leaves outside had fallen, but inside, students in USM's Environmental Science and Policy (ESP) program were seeing green all semester long.

Students taking Karen Wilson's Research and Analytical Methods class spent their fall semester studying aquaponics, a system that combines conventional aquaculture — raising fish and other aquatic creatures in controlled environments — with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water).

In mid-November, the class of just over a dozen cultivated nine pounds of rainbow Swiss chard and five pounds of cilantro using the baby offspring of Blue and White Nile tilapia in a symbiotic environment.

The Department of Environmental Science and Policy installed their aquaponics systems in August 2017 with a generous \$25,000 gift from Poland Spring/Nestlé Wa-

ters North America and support from the Maine EPSCOR project SEANET, a network of interdisciplinary researchers along the coast of Maine that helps to advance sustainable ecological aquaculture.

The system is located in a newly renovated greenhouse and attached teaching space in Bailey Hall on USM's Gorham campus. The project is an opportunity for USM students to apply their environmental science and policy skills and obtain real-life experience maintaining and troubleshooting a complex system, said Wilson, associate research professor in the ESP program.

"Research opportunities such as the aquaponics system at USM are where our students excel: hands-on applied science," Wilson said.

The aquaponics systems were built by Jeff Giallombardo, owner of the aquaponics company Maine Agrotech. They consist of two 250-gallon setups, each with a 150-gallon fish tank attached to a "swirl tank" to filter fish waste, connected to an 18-square-

foot grow bed.

The systems also include two 45-gallon fish tanks attached to two 4-square-foot grow beds.

As the water travels from the fish tanks, swirl tanks and grow beds, beneficial bacteria transform nitrogenous fish waste (in the form of ammonia) to nitrate, which is then used by plants, returning clean water to the fish tanks.

While the research-oriented class doesn't focus on aquaponics every semester, Wilson said she couldn't pass up the opportunity to teach the material.

"As a researcher, working with students on projects such as the aquaponics systems gives me a chance to try new techniques and pursue new angles to my own research," she said. "In this particular case, I was learning right along with them, so it really was a shared experience of discovery, success and, in some cases, failure."

"It's a win-win for me, and, I think, for the students," she added.



(L-R) **John T. Leonard**, MEMIC President Emeritus; **Michael Bourque**, MEMIC President & CEO; **Dana Kerr**, Associate Professor of Risk Management and Insurance

Enlightened Self-Interest

“Chance favors the prepared mind.” — LOUIS PASTEUR

The MEMIC Group, “the top workers’ compensation company in America,”* believes in all the benefits of public higher education. That’s why MEMIC recently established USM’s second endowed chair in support of the university’s Risk Management & Insurance Program (RM&I). Named in honor of our first president and CEO, the MEMIC John T. Leonard Chair assures that generations of USM students can explore and prepare for some of the best careers in Maine.

With a USM graduate, you will find well-rounded students supported by a talented faculty and dedicated staff. We encourage you to talk to department heads and the USM Foundation about how the university can help meet your workforce needs in the private, public and non-profit sectors. And the proof? More than 90% of USM’s RM&I graduates are working in the insurance and finance sector.



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Why We Give

Philanthropy is personal, and your gift to USM is a reflection of you and what you care about. The generous outpouring of support this year inspired us to ask four alumni supporters why they give to USM. **Here is what they said:**



“There are several reasons ‘why I give’ to USM. The University provides access to a high-quality education to students, including my daughter who chose to attend USM this coming fall. USM is a driving force in the Maine economy, working to meet the needs of both its students and the local economy. Most importantly, USM’s leadership has a clear plan for the future to move USM forward, providing more opportunities for Maine students. Making a gift to USM is a good investment.”

Jeff Lind '96, '06, Chief Operating Officer, Clark Insurance



“We give because if it weren’t for the USM community we wouldn’t be on the road to success, both personally and professionally. Our higher education paths were made possible, in part, by committed alumni and friends who felt compelled to give to USM. Now that we are beginning our own careers we’re proud and grateful to be able to do the same, even if we can only give small amounts right now.”

Bryn Gallagher '15, Juris Doctor Candidate, University of Maine School of Law 2018 and **Andrew Kiezulas '17**, MPPM candidate, Muskie School of Public Service 2018



“My USM degrees shaped me and gave me the tools to help others. As a community organizer, educator, policy maker, business owner and economic development director, I’ve been fortunate to work with the growing Maine immigrant and refugee communities. I’ve witnessed how new Mainers help our state grow. I give to USM because when I step on campus I can’t help but be energized by seeing all of the students who come here seeking to better their lives, thereby bettering mine and ours.”

Tae Chong '98, '08, Economic Development Consultant; Founder, *Incomer Magazine*

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